Claims

1.   A method for obtaining a postage verification
code (200), the method comprising the steps of:

5   transmitting a request (210) for a postage
verification code from a communication device (120) to a
Postal server (110); and

               receiving said request (220) at said Postal
server (110);

10   the method characterised by the steps of:

               generating (230) a postage verification code in
response to said request;

               transmitting (240) a postage verification code to
said communication device (120), such that a charge

15   associated with said postage verification code is
attributed to said communication device (120); and

               receiving (250) said postage verification code at
said communication device (120).

20   2.   The method for obtaining a postage verification
code (200) according to Claim 1, wherein said code
comprises a string of alphanumeric characters.

3.   The method for obtaining a postage verification

25   code (200) according to Claim 1, wherein said request
and/or said postage verification code are transmitted
wirelessly between said Postal server (110) and a
wireless communication device (120), the method further
characterised by the steps of:

30   providing said postage verification code to a
user of said wireless communication device; and

               applying (260) said postage verification code on
an item for posting.

4.   The method for wirelessly obtaining a postage verification code according to Claim 1, wherein the step of transmitting a request (210) includes transmitting

5   information relating to a type of postage required by a user of said communication device.

5.   The method for obtaining a postage verification code according to Claim 4, wherein said information

10   relating to a type of postage includes one or more of the following:

        (i) A price of postage required;
        (ii) A weight of said item to be posted;
        (iii) A class of postage;

15   (iv) An indication of a destination for said item to be posted.

6.   The method for obtaining a postage verification code according to Claim 4, wherein the step of

20   transmitting a request (210) includes transmitting a request to an address that corresponds to said type of postage.

7.   The method for obtaining a postage verification

25   code according to Claim 1, wherein the step of transmitting a request (210) includes transmitting information identifying a user of said communication device.

30 8.   The method for obtaining a postage verification code according to Claim 7, wherein said information identifying a user of said communication device includes one or more of the following:

(i) A name of the user;

(ii) A number associated with a wireless communication device of the user;

(iii) An International Mobile Subscriber

5   Identification (IMSI) number of the Subscriber Identity Module (SIM) of the user; or

(iv) An International Mobile Equipment Identification (IMEI) number of the wireless communication device.

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9.   The method for obtaining a postage verification code according to Claim 1, wherein the postage verification code is generated based on information contained in the request, for example a destination

15   post/zip code.

10.   The method for obtaining a postage verification code according to Claim 2, the method further characterised by the step of:

20   verifying said postage verification code applied to said item at a sorting office.

11.   The method for obtaining a postage verification code according to Claim 2, wherein the step of

25   transmitting a wireless request includes:

transmitting a wireless request using a GSM unstructured supplementary service data message; or

transmitting a wireless request using a GSM short message service message; or

30   accessing a website hosted by the postal server.

12.   A wireless communication device (120) adapted to perform method steps of Claim 1.

13.   The wireless communication device (120) according
to Claim 12, wherein the wireless communication device is
one of a cellular phone, a portable or mobile radio, a
5   personal digital assistant, a laptop computer, a
wirelessly networked PC.

14.   A Postal server (110) adapted to perform the
method steps of Claim 1.

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15.   A storage medium storing processor-implementable
instructions for controlling one or more processors to
carry out the method of Claim 1.

15   16.   A postal server (110) characterised by:
            an interface port (320), through which the postal
server is capable of sending and receiving postage
verification code messages or requests;
            a decoder for receiving a request for a postage
20   verification code from a communication device (120); and
            an encoding software application (350) to
generate and send a postage verification code to said
communication device (120), in response to said request,
such that a charge associated with said postage
25   verification code is attributed to said communication
device (120).

17.   The postal server (110) according to Claim 16,
wherein the encoding software application (350) generates
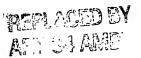30   a postage verification code comprising a string of
alphanumeric characters.

18.   The postal server (110) according to Claim 16,
wherein the encoding software application (350) generates
a postage verification code based on a type of postage
requested, for example, based on information relating to
5   one or more of the following:

(i) A price of postage required;

(ii) A weight of said item to be posted;

(iii) A class of postage;

(iv) An indication of a destination for said item
10   to be posted;

(v) A destination postcode.

19.   The postal server (110) according to Claim 16,
wherein the encoding software application (350) generates
15   a postage verification code based on information
identifying a user of a wireless communication device
(120) or a wireless communication device making said
request, for example, based on information relating to
one or more of the following:

20   (i) A name of the user;

(ii) A mobile telephone number of the user;

(iii) An International Mobile Subscriber
Identification (IMSI) number of the Subscriber Identity
Module (SIM) of the user; or

25   (iv) An International Mobile Equipment
Identification (IMEI) number of the wireless
communication device.

20.   The postal server (110) according to Claim 16,
30   the postal server (110) further comprising a database,
operably coupled to said encoding software application
(350) for maintaining a record of the generated postage
verification code, such that the record can be used to

validate postage of an item bearing the postage
verification code.

21.   A Postal Sorting machine adapted to verify said
5   postage verification code applied to an item in
accordance with the method steps of Claim 1.

22.   A Postal Sorting machine adapted to verify said
postage verification code applied to an item in
10   accordance with the postal server (110) of Claim 16.